



LIVESTOCK

CATTLE AND CALVES

New Mexico's inventory of all cattle and calves as of January 1, 2005, was 1,500,000 head, a slight decrease from 2004. Milk cow inventory dropped from 325,000 head to 318,000 head. Dairy producers kept 100,000 heifers for replacement, 33 percent more than the previous year. Beef cow inventory increased by 3.7 percent to 472,000 head in 2005. Ranchers held on to 90,000 heifers for beef cow replacement, up 5.9 percent from 2004. The number of steers weighing 500 pounds and over dropped 21 percent to 150,000 head. Bull inventory remained unchanged at 45,000 head. Calves on hand less than 500 pounds, including both beef and dairy calves, totaled 240,000 head. The 2004 calf crop was estimated at 600,000 head, up 1.7 percent from 2003. Cattle and calves on full feed for the slaughter market on January 1, 2005, increased to 126,000 head compared to 115,000 head the previous year. Gross income from cattle and calves totaled \$952 million in 2004, up 25 percent.

RANGE AND PASTURE FEED

Beginning in mid-March weekly measurements of range and pasture conditions were taken with ratings of 44 percent very poor, 37 percent poor, 18 percent fair, and 1 percent good. This continues a downward trend from the previous two years and was considerably worse than last year which was 24 percent very poor, 27 percent poor, 38 percent fair, and 11 percent good. April reports indicated ranchers had enough moisture throughout the month to improve range and pasture conditions slightly. May showed business as usual with ranchers feeding, watering, and branding. Pasture conditions in June declined to 15 percent very poor, 47 percent poor, 28 percent fair, and 10 percent good. The decline was mainly due to temperatures hitting 100 degrees in early June. Ranchers received moisture in July, benefitting most crops, livestock, and range conditions. August and September showed an improvement in conditions as temperatures dropped

and rains increased throughout the state. In October ranchers began weaning calves and moving cattle from summer pastures. Throughout the rest of the year, conditions continued to improve due to winter rains and cooler temperatures with the final report in the last week of November indicating 7 percent very poor, 23 percent poor, 38 percent fair, 31 percent good, and 1 percent excellent.

DAIRY

The state dairy industry again began on a high note with the average number of milk cows in January totaling 325,000 head. The number of milk cows during the year averaged 326,000. Milk production continued to climb setting an all time high of 6.7 billion pounds. Cash receipts from marketings and gross producer income, both with growths of 27 percent, surpassed the \$1 billion mark for the first time. New Mexico continues to be ranked seventh in the nation in milk production and number of milk cows. Milk was ranked the state's number one cash commodity for the third year in a row.

SHEEP AND LAMBS

Sheep and lamb inventory as of January 1, 2005, totaled 145,000 head, down 9 percent from a year earlier. The number of breeding sheep for 2004 decreased by 13,000 head to 120,000 head. Market sheep and lambs also dropped to 25,000 head. The 2004 lamb crop, at 85,000 head, was 14 percent below the previous year. Producer gross income decreased 1.8 percent to \$7.6 million. Wool was sheared from 140,000 sheep and lambs, producing 1.02 million pounds. Value of wool produced declined 25 percent to just over \$1.0 million as the average price of wool dropped \$0.10 to \$1.00 per pound.